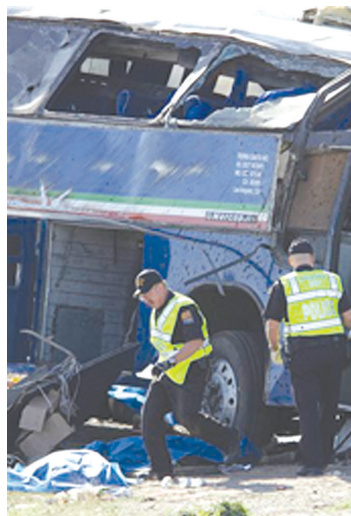


INSIDE TODAY

U.S. NEWS

AZ BUS CRASH



Arizona Department of Public Safety police are saying six people were killed in the crash on Interstate 10 about 25 miles south of Phoenix after a bus traveling from Mexico to Los Angeles struck a pickup truck and rolled before landing upright on its wheels on Friday, March 5, 2010, in Sacaton, Ariz.

Read more on Page A5

SPORTS NEWS

CAT'S PAUSE



An emotional Jake Delhomme covers his face during a news conference where the former starting quarterback discussed being cut from the Carolina Panthers during a press conference in Charlotte, N.C. Friday, March 5, 2010.

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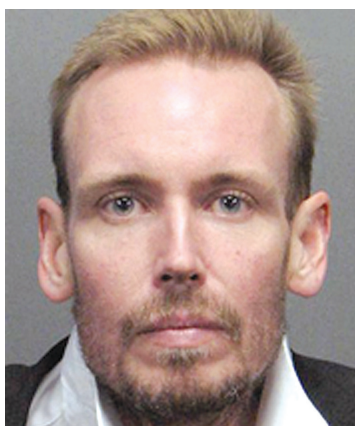
Pentagon shooter had a history of mental illness

By TRACIE CONE
BROOKE DONALD
Associated Press Writer

HOLLISTER, Calif. — The man who opened fire in front of the Pentagon had a history of mental illness and had become so erratic that his parents reached out to local authorities weeks ago with a warning that he was unstable and might have a gun, authorities said Friday.

It's still unclear why John Patrick Bedell opened fire Thursday at the Pentagon entrance, wounding two police officers before he was fatally shot. The two officers were hospitalized briefly with minor injuries.

Bedell was diagnosed as bipolar, or manic depressive, and had been in and out of treatment programs for years.



His psychiatrist, J. Michael Nelson, said Bedell tried to self-medicate with marijuana, inadvertently making his symptoms more pronounced. "Without the stabilizing medication, the symptoms of his disinhibition, agitation and fearfulness complicated the lack of treatment," Nelson said.

Continued on next page



This undated booking photo provided by the Washoe County jail via the Reno Gazette Journal on Friday, March 5, 2010 shows John Patrick Bedell. Authorities said Bedell pulled a handgun at a Pentagon entrance in Washington on Thursday, March 4, 2010, shot two police officers and was mortally wounded in an exchange of gunfire. The two officers were hospitalized briefly with minor injuries.

Associated Press

U.S. may opt for military to try Sept. 11 suspects

JENNIFER LOVEN

AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Looking to breathe life into President Barack Obama's stalled pledge to close the Guantanamo Bay prison, White House advisers are inching toward recommending military trials for alleged Sept. 11 mastermind Khalid Sheik Mohammed and four accused henchmen.

Continued on page 4

Strong aftershocks hit quake-stunned Chile

EVA VERGARIA
MICHAEL WARREN

Associated Press Writer

CONCEPCION, Chile (AP) — The most powerful aftershock in six days sent terrified Chileans fleeing into quake-shattered streets and forced doctors to evacuate some patients from a major hospital on Friday as the nation struggled to comprehend the scope of the disaster that hit it.

Continued on page 7



People stand outside their houses after an aftershock hit Concepcion, Chile, Friday, March 5, 2010. Several aftershocks struck different areas of the country, that was hit by an earthquake and tsunami killing hundreds of people in the central coastal areas last Feb. 27.

Associated Press

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EXPLOSIVE FLAVOR

McFLURRY CRUNCH

Continued from front page



Pentagon Police officers patrol a parking lot and sidewalk outside the Pentagon after a shooting, Thursday, March 4, 2010.
Associated Press

His parents reported him missing Jan. 4, a day after a Texas Highway Patrol officer stopped him for speeding in Texarkana. Bedell told the highway patrolman he was heading to the East Coast, and began acting strangely — sitting on his knees by the side of the highway and turning off his cell phone when it would

ring.

Bedell said it was his mother calling, prompting the patrolman to answer the phone and talk briefly with her. Family friend Reb Monaco said Kaye Bedell asked the officer to take him to a mental health facility, but that the son refused.

The patrolman let Bedell go

after issuing a speeding ticket and a citation for possession of drug paraphernalia, including a pipe and a green plastic box with marijuana residue.

The next day, Kaye told deputies in California that her son had no reason to travel to the East Coast because he had no friends or family there and she and her husband were worried about his mental state, San Benito County Sheriff Curtis Hill said.

Hill also said Bedell's parents found an e-mail from their son that indicated he had made a \$600 purchase from a shooting range in the Sacramento area that could have been a gun or ammunition.

The 36-year-old Bedell returned to his parent's home Jan. 18, telling them "not to ask any questions" about where he had been. But he left after that, and his parents didn't know where he went.

Little is known about his trip east, but authorities know he spent time in Reno, where Washoe County Sheriff Mike Haley said he was arrested

on Feb. 1 with two ounces of marijuana in his car but no weapons. The Bedell family put out a statement Friday saying they were "devastated as a family by the news."

"We may never know why he made this terrible decision," the statement said. "One thing is clear though — his actions were caused by an illness and not a defective character."

Investigators were trying to unravel a bizarre series of Internet postings that suggested Bedell was fascinated with conspiracy theories, computer programming, libertarian economics and the science of warfare. Curiously, Bedell also proposed in 2004 that the Pentagon fund his own research on smart weapons. The 28-page proposal outlined his idea for DNA nanotechnology research that might "provide significant new capabilities for the Department of Defense and the individual warfighter."

That document is the first tangible link to surface connecting Bedell and the

Pentagon.

On the day of the attack, Bedell left his green, 12-year-old Toyota in a nearby mall parking garage.

The six-foot tall, blue-eyed software devotee approached the Pentagon entrance Thursday evening wearing a jacket, dress shirt and pants, seeming like any other end-of-the-day commuter.

Bedell, the officials say, opened fire with a 9 mm handgun just five feet from the nearest officer, Marvin Carraway. Fellow officer Jeffrey Amos ran out of a nearby guard booth to confront Bedell, as did a third, unidentified officer. All three officers gave chase and fired at Bedell, who was struck in the head and left arm.

Witness Dan Namisi said he had just emerged from the Metro station, headed for a bus home, when he heard a "pop." The Uganda native hit the ground, and the next thing he knew, officers swarmed over him and put handcuffs on him.



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Airport body scanners spreading across U.S.

GLEN JOHNSON

Associated Press Writer
BOSTON (AP) — The Transportation Security Administration on Friday announced nine more U.S. airports that will receive body-scanning technology, as the U.S. heightens its effort to detect hidden explosives and contraband amid a threat highlighted by an attempted airplane bombing on Christmas Day.

TSA security director Lee Kair said units will be fielded in the coming months at Fort Lauderdale, Florida; San Jose, California; Columbus, Ohio; San Diego; Charlotte, North Carolina; Cincinnati; Los Angeles; Oakland, California; and Kansas City.

They will join three machines going online Monday at Boston's Logan International Airport, and one being deployed next week at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago.

All are among 150 machines bought with money from the federal stimulus package signed by President Barack Obama last year. They join 40 machines already in use at 19 airports nationwide.

Both the new and existing machines will also now be in a primary position, meaning they will be the default screening equipment passengers face at a checkpoint. The existing machines have been in a secondary position, being used only when a passenger failed a metal screening or posed some other risk factor.

Passengers retain the right to opt out of a body scanning for a more intense but traditional screening. The Associated Press timed a body scanning at 25 seconds, and Kair said he did not expect them to take any longer than a passenger would have to otherwise wait for the X-ray of carry-on bags.

Deployment of the machines was announced in the fall, before Nigerian Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab allegedly tried to blow up a Detroit-bound airliner on Christmas Day with explosives concealed in his underwear. Even so, that event highlighted the need for additional security in the U.S. aviation system.

Other countries have

also signed on to use the technology, including Nigeria and the Netherlands, where Abdulmutallab started his flight and then connected to the U.S. Civil libertarians have complained that the new machines can violate a passenger's privacy. The American Civil Liberties Union has denounced the screening as a "virtual strip search."

One Logan passenger didn't share the concerns.

"There's always going to be issues. As long as they maintain proper control over the situation, I have no problem with it," said Michelle Carrier, 32, who was flying to Houston. "Freedom's important, but this is one of the prices you pay for safety."

The image from a machine displayed for reporters on Friday showed the blurry outline of a female volunteer. None of her clothing was visible, nor were her genitals, but the broad contours of her chest and buttocks were. Her face also was blurred.

The image included the shadow of a cell phone purposely left on her belt, as well as the metal buttons on her pants. But overall, it looked like the outline of a ghost. Samples are on display on the TSA's Web site.

TSA officials said that the units won't be able to print or store images, and that the officer viewing them will have no contact with passengers. The passenger will remain at the checkpoint until the officer in the viewing room radios an all-clear to another officer standing with the passenger.

Passengers who accept a scan — and pass — will not have to walk through a metal detector or other security equipment. Those who decline will have to walk through a metal detector and also submit to a patdown. Kair said he was confident terrorists couldn't concentrate on beating the patdown because of other layers in the security system, including expanded use of explosive trace detection equipment and behavioral analysis.

"When you go through all the layers of security, they have a multiplying effect," he said.

The Obama administration announced in February 2009 that it would provide \$1 billion for airport screening as part of its \$787 billion federal stimulus package.

In May, the administration detailed how that money would be spent — including \$25 million for the new scanners. Between May and September, the department asked contractors to provide proposals for building the scanners. Competing models were tested over the summer.

The department awarded the contract to California-based Rapiscan at the end of September.



crowd of photographers and video cameramen film Italian Health Minister Ferruccio Fazio inside a body scanner during its presentation to journalists, at Rome's Fiumicino International Airport, Thursday, March 4, 2010. Rome's main airport is trying out Italy's first body scanner at a terminal that serves U.S. airliners.

Associated Press



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This March 1, 2003 file picture shows Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, shortly after his capture during a raid in Pakistan. White House advisers are nearing a recommendation for President Barack Obama to choose a military trial for self-professed Sept. 11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and four of his alleged henchmen, senior administration officials said Thursday March 4, 2010.

Associated Press

Continued from front page

Attorney General Eric Holder's original plan to try them in a civilian court in New York City met with criticism so fierce that it threatened to derail Obama's promise to shut the U.S. military's Cuban prison.

As difficult as the politics are concerning how and where to try the most notorious terror suspect in U.S. custody, that's only one step toward the even more fraught and complicated goal of closing Guantanamo where Mohammed and nearly 200 other terror detainees remain.

Closing Guantanamo was a signature promise of Obama's presidency, and it is still unkept well past his original deadline of January. Failing to keep it would have huge implications for the president, both with

his base of supporters in the Democratic Party and in his efforts to remake America's image around the globe.

Holder decided in November to transfer Mohammed and four other accused Sept. 11 terrorists from Guantanamo to New York City for civilian trials. City officials initially embraced the idea.

But they later reversed themselves, citing the enormous costs, security and logistics of hosting a Sept. 11 trial — making things awkward for the Obama administration. And then the attempted Christmas Day airline bombing altered the political dynamic further, as Republicans focused anew on Obama's terrorism policies in general, including the trials.

The drumbeat of policy criticism, combined with the increasingly loud outcry from New York, made it nearly

impossible for the White House to hold on to Holder's decision without review. That review is not finished, so no new recommendation is yet before the president. A decision is not expected for weeks, said a senior administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to discuss private deliberations.

But the recommendation almost certainly will be for a switch to a military process for the five accused men, said administration officials.

The reason for the probable reversal is simple: The more the trial controversy spun out of control, the harder it was becoming to make progress on other, already difficult issues crucial to closing Guantanamo, such as securing funding from Congress for the closure, arranging a replacement facility in the United States and planning other trials.

White House officials now see the Mohammed trial decision as the key to unlocking those logjams.

Republicans in Congress, including Rep. Peter King and Sen. Lindsey Graham, have proposed a ban on trying terrorism defendants in any American community.

The administration believes a civilian trial is doable, even preferable, as a demonstration of U.S. commitment to rule of law. Officials have cited the numerous terrorism trials held previously in U.S. criminal courts. They also argue that decisions on how to prosecute defendants are not for lawmakers to make.

But the White House also wants to move on.

As the Obama administration has been forced to defend its terrorism policies, the White House has taken control of the decision-making process on major terror trials and in negotiations with key lawmakers, all with greatly reduced input from the Justice Department.

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6 people killed in bus crash south of Phoenix

By JACQUES BILLEAUD

Associated Press Writer

SACATON, Ariz. — Six people were ejected from a bus and killed Friday when the vehicle hit a pickup and rolled over on the interstate south of Phoenix, state police said.

The six were thrown about 10 yards in the accident about 5:30 a.m. on the Gila River Indian Reservation near the community of Sacaton, according to the Arizona Department of Public Safety. Their bodies were covered with blue tarps midmorning Friday, and police said there may be another victim under the bus. The roof of the bus was crushed and all the windows were knocked out, with one thrown as far as 25 yards.

DPS spokesman Bart Graves said two men and four women, all aboard the bus, were killed. The bus, traveling from central Mexico to Los Angeles, was carrying at least 22 passengers, and the surviving 16 passengers were all injured. Police said the rollover triggered a second accident when another pickup slowed and was hit by a sedan. One person from the sedan was taken to a hospital.

Eight of the injured were taken to Maricopa Medical Center in Phoenix, where six were in critical condition with life-threatening injuries ranging from broken spines and pelvises to head injuries, hospital spokesman Michael Murphy said.

He said an 11-year-old boy and the bus driver were among the patients at the hospital, and that the two were in guarded condition with non-life-threatening injuries.

Four patients, two in critical condition and two in good condition, were taken to Scottsdale Healthcare Osborn hospital. Three patients, one in critical condition and two in good condition, were taken to St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center in Phoenix. Two others were at Banner Good Samaritan Medical Center in Phoenix, but the hospital did not release their conditions.

Early reports said the bus hit a semi, but Graves said later a semi was not involved in the crash.

Police said the bus hit the pickup, veered into the central

median, then overcorrected and rolled once before landing on its wheels.

The accident scene quickly became a mass of police and rescue personnel as ambulances arrived and medics set up a triage area in the middle of the normally busy interstate, preparing the

injured for transport.

Medical helicopters landed on the freeway to airlift the most critically injured to area hospitals. The bus originated in central Mexico near Durango, Graves said. It entered the United States at El Paso, Texas, and was traveling westbound on I-10.



An Arizona Department of Public Safety police officer looks through the wreckage of a tour bus including the dead bodies, covered in blue tarp, after a multi-vehicle crash on Friday, March 5, 2010, in Sacaton, Ariz.

Associated Press

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Brown blames U.S. over Iraq reconstruction errors



Britain's Prime Minister Gordon Brown arrives at Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in London, Friday March 5, 2010, to give evidence at the Iraq inquiry in London, which is investigating the circumstances surrounding British involvement in the Iraq war.

Associated Press

DAVID STRINGER
Associated Press Writer

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Gordon Brown insisted Friday the decision to invade Iraq was justified, but told a major inquiry into the war that the United States

dismissed warnings of chaos and violence once Saddam Hussein was toppled.

In four hours of evidence to Britain's inquiry on Iraq, a somber Brown repeatedly expressed regret over the lost lives of soldiers and civilians,

and acknowledged mistakes were made by leaders in Washington and London.

Brown, who served as Treasury chief from 1997 to 2007 and approved military spending, dismissed claims he had choked Britain's defense budgets or allowed soldiers to go to war without adequate equipment.

Defending his role in the conflict, but cautious not to inflame tensions over the unpopular war ahead of a looming national election campaign, Brown said joining the 2003 U.S.-led invasion was a tough call.

"We have got to recognize that war may be necessary, but it is also tragic in the effect it has on people's lives," said Brown, who voted — like a majority of British lawmakers — to approve Britain's role in the war.

"These were difficult decisions ...," Brown said. "I believe they were the right decisions for the right reasons."

But he was critical of U.S. planning, saying American officials failed to heed warnings about the need for clarity on how to protect and govern Iraq in the aftermath of the invasion.

"It was one of my regrets that I wasn't able to be more successful in pushing the Americans on this issue — that the planning for

reconstruction was essential, just the same as planning for the war," Brown said. He said he'd drafted a paper listing British reconstruction plans and sent it to the U.S. government in early March 2003.

The inquiry is Britain's third and widest-ranging examination of the conflict, which triggered huge protests and left 179 British troops dead before the country's forces withdrew from Iraq last year. The inquiry won't apportion blame or establish liability, but will offer recommendations later this year on how to prevent errors in the future.

Brown initially appeared nervous as he began his testimony — toying with his suit jacket and a leather file containing a thick sheaf of notes — but soon relaxed, even smiling to members of the audience as he left for a lunch break.

"How are you finding it?" Brown asked onlookers as the hearing broke for a recess, though his question was met with silence.

Brown's evidence followed testimony in January by former Prime Minister Tony Blair, who led the country to war.

Unlike Blair, who defiantly stood by the invasion and argued Saddam was a threat to the entire world, Brown

said he believed the war was justified because Baghdad had breached international rules in failing to abide by U.N. resolutions.

He insisted Iraq had posed the first serious test to the post-Cold War world, claiming any failure to depose the Iraqi leader would have emboldened other dictators and stirred global tensions.

Brown also sought to distance himself from President George W. Bush, suggesting their relations were "amicable" and criticizing the doctrine of some members of Bush's administration.

"I never subscribed to what you might call the neo-conservative proposition that somehow, at the barrel of a gun, overnight, liberty or democracy could be conjured up," Brown told the panel.

In contrast to Blair's electric evidence, audience members yawned and stretched as Brown testified — two people even left during a morning coffee break, leaving empty two prized seats earlier allocated in a public ballot.

Brown acknowledged that while he had played an important role in the Iraq war, he had not been invited to some key meetings and was unaware of the detail of letters exchanged between Blair and Bush.

"I had regular conversations with Tony Blair and we talked about those issues, but I do not have copies of those letters and I don't know the exact conversation — and he wouldn't expect me to," he said.

Critics have charged that Brown cut military budgets, meaning troops lacked adequate equipment in Iraq and Afghanistan. Gen. Michael Walker, a former head of the British armed forces, said in an earlier hearing that the country's senior military chiefs threatened to resign in a dispute with Brown in 2004 over funds.

Brown told the panel Britain spent 8 billion pounds (\$12 billion) on the Iraq war on top of annual defense budgets.



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Continued from front page

People raced into the streets in pajamas as a magnitude-6.0 aftershock struck Concepcion shortly before dawn.

A magnitude-6.6 shock at 8:47 a.m. (6:47 a.m. EST) then rattled buildings for nearly a minute.

It was the strongest aftershock since a magnitude-6.9 jolt shortly after Saturday's historic quake and it sent office chairs spilling from upper floor of an already-damaged 22-story building. Fear of additional damage led officials to evacuate some patients from the regional hospital in downtown Concepcion.

"They sent us all home," said 47-year-old Aaron Valenzuela, who hobbled through the street because four toes had been amputated due to an injury he suffered in Saturday's big quake.

Dr. Patricia Correa, who was overseeing the hospital's emergency ward, said her part of the five-story building "is on the point of collapsing. The walls cracked."

As a daily curfew meant to halt looting expired at noon, people flooded into the streets of Concepcion and formed lines about 100 long behind an intermittently functioning automatic teller machine, for

a rare open pharmacy and at a corner store.

A sign at the shop announced it was out of flour, water, candles, rice, cheese, eggs and diapers, though jam, sugar, coffee and onions remained.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon arrived in the capital, Santiago, promising support for Chile.

"The Chilean government is asking for international aid and we will give it," he said. Chile's U.N. Ambassador Heraldo Munoz told a press conference at U.N. headquarters in New York it's estimated that reconstruction "will cost Chile about \$30 billion."

Amir Dossal, executive director of the U.N. Office for Partnerships, said private donations have begun to arrive, among them \$1 million from Wal-Mart and \$500,000 from Hewlett Packard.

President Michelle Bachelet, meanwhile, met with her successor, Sebastian Pinera, and they promised to try to avoid letting the March 11 hand-over of power interrupt aid efforts.

"The new government will have an immense challenge," Bachelet said.

Officials were still struggling to determine the human toll of the magnitude-8.8 quake, as well as the damage to roads, ports and buildings such as

hospitals.

Disaster officials announced they had double-counted at least 271 missing as dead in the hardest-hit part of the country — an error that would drop the official death toll to about 540 if there were no other mistakes.

But Interior Department officials said that from now on, they would release only the number of dead who had been identified: 279 as of Friday.

The government also said Friday it had removed Cmdr. Mariano Rojas as head of the Navy's oceanographic service over its failure to issue a tsunami warning for the Pacific immediately after Saturday's quake.

Port captains in several towns issued their own warnings, but a national alert never came, and some say that failure led to deaths. The tsunami is believed responsible for much of the deaths and damage.

Bachelet says it will take three years to rebuild the region wracked by the earthquake and tsunami, and that task is all too clear to the people trying to clean up the ruins of their towns.

In the tourist town of Dichato, a few miles north up the coast from Concepcion, the quake and tsunami killed at least 19 people and smashed neat wooden houses and small



A view of a quake-damaged building in Concepcion, Chile, Friday, March 5, 2010. Several aftershocks struck different areas of the country, that was hit by an earthquake and tsunami last Feb. 27, killing hundreds of people in the central coastal areas.

Associated Press

hotels into huge piles of splinters.

The town of 4,000 people stank Thursday of decomposing fish and a fishing boat marooned far inland was full of rotting octopus.

Bachelet's government had made a difference in the town before the quake, building 130 neat mustard-yellow duplexes in a public housing project that opened in September and providing 60 million pesos — \$120,000 — to restore the facades of businesses along main street, said Mabel Gomez, president of the local chamber of commerce.

But as they rooted through the ruins, Dichato's residents said they are pinning their hopes for renewal on the

next president, a conservative billionaire.

"I think he has the ability to do it," said Luis Omar Cid Jara, 66, whose bakery and roast chicken shop were destroyed. Pinera, who takes office March 11, named new governors for the six hardest-hit regions and told them to get to work even before his inauguration. His immediate priorities: Find the missing; ensure law and order; restore utilities; and tend to the injured.

Pinera also stepped up his criticism of Bachelet's administration on Thursday, knocking "the lack of coordination and the weaknesses that this tragedy has uncovered with brutal eloquence."

Somali pirates, security personnel in 4 shootouts

KATHARINE HOURELD
 Associated Press Writers
 NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Signaling a new offensive mindset, international military officials vowed Friday to fight the pirates as swarms of Somalis moved into the waters off East Africa. Four shootouts with pirates showed that high-seas attacks are intensifying with the end of the monsoon season. Nearly half the 47 ships

hijacked off Somalia last year were taken in March and April — the most dangerous months of the year for ships in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean. In the most serious skirmish Friday, six pirates attacked a vessel before breaking off and chasing the French fishing boat Torre Giulia, said Cmdr. John Harbour, spokesman for the EU Naval Force. A French military detachment onboard a nearby ship fired



In this image issued by EU NAVFOR on Friday March 5, 2010 shows the EU NAVFOR French warship FS Nivose with Somali pirate skiffs off the Somali coast on Friday March 5, 2010. Associated Press

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warning shots at the pirates. The ship then approached the skiff and collided with it, sinking the skiff and throwing the pirates into the water. Four were rescued, but two others were missing, Harbour said. A spike in attacks is likely in the coming weeks, said Harbour. This season, though, ship owners and sailors are more prepared to evade pirates, fight back, or they have armed security onboard, raising the likelihood of violence. “We know the monsoon is over. We know they’re coming. We’re taking the fight to the pirates,” said Harbour. Crews are successfully repelling more attacks, making it harder for pirates to capture ships and earn multi-million dollar ransoms. In turn, the Somali gangs are increasingly turning violent. The International Maritime Bureau says only seven ships were fired on worldwide in 2004 but that 114 ships were fired on last year off the Somali coast alone. That’s up from 39 incidents off Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden in 2008. In a second incident Friday, the EU Naval Force intercepted a pirate group of one mothership and two skiffs

that had attacked a separate French vessel. That attack was also repelled by military personnel onboard. An EU Naval Force helicopter tracked the pirates and watched them throw a rocket launcher, grappling hooks and fuel barrels into the ocean. The naval force said it destroyed the mothership and one skiff and took 11 pirates into custody. In the third and fourth attacks, pirates assaulted two Spanish tuna fishing boats off the coast of Kenya, Spain’s Ministry of Defense said. A spokesman said the boats had contacted Spanish navy forces in the area, who dispatched a plane. Between the air support and the private guards on the boats, they repelled the attack. The spokesman spoke on condition of anonymity because government rules don’t allow him to be identified. Friday’s clashes followed a firefight Thursday between pirates and private security contractors onboard a Spanish fishing vessel. The pirates hit the ship with a rocket-propelled grenade and the guards returned fire. No one was hurt, but the International Maritime Bureau has expressed fears that the increased use

of armed contractors could spark an arms race between fishermen and pirates, who are firing at ships with increasing frequency. “The EU Navfor agrees with that recommendation because we don’t want an escalation of firepower,” Harbour said. “Also, there are lots of gas and oil tankers in the Gulf of Aden that wouldn’t benefit from grenades and bullets flying around.” Pirate attacks off East Africa have dramatically increased over the past three years. Somali pirates attacked ships 217 times in 2009, according to the International Maritime Bureau. That was up from 111 attacks in 2008. Many ship owners are investing in physical defenses like stringing razor wire and adding fire hoses that can hit attackers with streams of high-pressure water. Some ships are even having electric fence-style systems installed. Crews have thrown everything from oil drums to wooden planks at would-be hijackers clambering up ladders. Last month a crew played the sound of dogs barking over an amplifier to frighten off attackers.



Polish school children walk in rubber boots that they have just received, in Jarocin, Poland, Friday, March 5, 2010.

Associated Press

Free rain boots for 1,000 Polish kids facing mud

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — Hundreds of Polish school kids are getting a leg up with free rubber boots as they face months next to a muddy construction site.

Officials in the town of Jarocin gave 1,000 pairs of made-to-fit boots to children and teachers whose school is set in an area where new underground water and sewage pipes are being installed.

On Friday the children received their boots, which came in different colors and styles — including army green camouflage patterns for boys and bright pink versions for girls. Jerzy Wolski, the town official in charge of water systems, said the city persuaded the construction company to pay 20,000 zloty (\$7,000) for the shoes, noting it is just a fraction of the project's 40 million zloty (\$14 million) price tag.

Police: USVI senator tried to strangle girlfriend

By JUDI SHIMEL

Associated Press Writer

CHARLOTTE AMALIE, U.S. Virgin Islands

— A prominent territorial senator was charged Friday with pulling a gun on a 19-year-old woman and trying to strangle her.

Senator Adlah "Foncie" Donastorg Jr., 47, dropped his head when the judge announced he had found probable cause for the charges of aggravated assault and battery, third-degree assault, brandishing a weapon and using a weapon in a crime of violence.

Donastorg's attorney, Gordon Rhea, argued that someone bribed the woman to make the allegations against Donastorg, who ran unsuccessfully for governor of the U.S. Caribbean territory in 2006 and was chairman of the legislature's finance committee.

"My client asserts that he is innocent and looks forward to a trial at which he will prove the charges brought against him are false," Rhea said after the hearing, which was attended by Donastorg's wife.

Conviction on all the charges would carry a

penalty of at least eight years in prison.

Police say a woman they described as Donastorg's girlfriend told them that he pulled a gun on her on Jan. 28 and told her he would shoot her if she did not leave his yard. Police said Donastorg then got into a car with the woman and tried to strangle her. The woman's name was not released.

Detective Deborah Jack testified that the victim called her and asked that the charges be dropped shortly after officers contacted the senator and advised him of the investigation. She said police are still investigating allegations that the woman received a \$150,000 bribe to bring false allegations against Donastorg.

Judge Alan Smith ordered Donastorg to give up his weapons, despite Rhea's argument that he should keep them because they were licensed.

Donastorg is married and has six children, according to the legislature's Web site.

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Michael J. Fox named honorary doctor in Sweden



Canadian actor Michael J. Fox speaks during the closing ceremony for the Vancouver 2010 Olympics in Vancouver, British Columbia, Sunday, Feb. 28, 2010. (AP Photo/Charlie Riedel)

STOCKHOLM — Sweden's Karolinska institute says it will give an honorary degree of medicine to Canadian-American actor Michael J. Fox for his work to raise funds and awareness for Parkinson's disease. The institute, which awards the annual Nobel Prize in medicine, says the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research has since 2000 given more than \$175 million to research aimed at developing drugs against the disease. Fox was diagnosed with Parkinson's in 1991. The disease is a progressive neurological condition that impairs the motor skills. Karolinska says Fox will receive the doctorate in a ceremony in New York on Friday.



A lone security guard stands with an Oscar statue outside the entrance of the Kodak Theatre as preparations for the 82nd Academy Awards continue in Los Angeles, Calif., on Friday, March 5, 2010. The Academy Awards will be held on Sunday, March 7. (AP Photo/Amy Sancetta)

Gifts, parties and celebs: L.A. readies for Oscars

By SANDY COHEN, AP Entertainment Writer Sandy Cohen, Ap Entertainment Writer – 1 hr 27 mins ago
LOS ANGELES – Hollywood is in full-on Oscar mode. The red carpet has been laid out in front of the Kodak Theatre, topped with a plastic sheet in case of rain. Traffic is snarled. Tourists are flocking to Hollywood & Highland to see a bit of the Academy Awards preparations and snap photos of themselves with giant Oscar statues. The theater itself buzzes with activity, as rehearsals continue from morning until night, with the occasional celebrity quietly stepping in to practice presenting the coveted golden guy.



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BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY

Stocks rise after better-than-expected jobs report

By STEPHEN BERNARD,
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — Stocks rose Friday after the government's employment report showed fewer jobs were cut in February than expected.

The Labor Department's monthly report is closely watched by investors and is seen as the most important measure of the economy's health.

The better-than-expected jobs report helped push oil and other commodities higher. That helped energy and material companies like ExxonMobil Corp. and Chevron Corp.

Apple Inc. got a big boost as well after the company said its much-anticipated iPad table computer will hit store shelves on April 3.

Employers cut 36,000 jobs last month, better than the 50,000 cuts forecast by economists polled by Thomson Reuters. The unemployment rate held steady at 9.7 percent. Economists were expecting it to rise to 9.8 percent.

Friday's gains, which followed a late-day rally on Thursday, suggests that investors are optimistic the U.S. economy is improving. Though employers aren't yet adding full-time staff, jobs growth is fundamental to a recovery because it puts money in more workers pockets, allowing them to increase spending.

"We haven't won the game yet," said James Meyer, chief investment officer at Tower Bridge Advisors. "We're just getting back to neutral. You can't get from negative to positive without crossing zero."

In afternoon trading, the Dow Jones industrial average rose 82.76, or 0.8 percent, to 10,526.90. The Standard & Poor's 500 index gained 11.34, or 1 percent, to

1,134.31, while the Nasdaq composite index added 26.74, or 1.2 percent, to 2,319.05.

About five stocks rose for every one that fell on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to 430.8 million shares, compared with 424.1 million at the same time Thursday.

Signs of future jobs growth were encouraging in the report. Temporary workers, which are often seen as a precursor to employers adding full-time staff, rose 48,000 last month. Average hourly earnings rose by 3 cents to \$22.46.

Analysts say Thursday's productivity report also provided positive signs about future jobs growth heading into the jobs report. Worker productivity rose by 6.9 percent in the fourth quarter.

Employers can only squeeze so much production out of current workers before they need to add more staff, said Michael Cannivet, portfolio manager at Palo Capital.

The Labor Department wouldn't quantify if severe snowstorms that pummeled the East Coast last month had any impact on the report. Economists estimated before the report that the storms could inflate job losses by 100,000 or more.

Jerry Harris, president and chief investment officer at Sterne Agee Asset Management, said March's results could be even better because the bad weather likely negatively affected February's data.

Energy companies were among the biggest winners on the day as oil rose about 1.7 percent to \$81.61 a barrel. Chevron shares rose \$1.14 to \$74.22, while ExxonMobil rose 99 cents to \$66.39.

Apple surged \$8.02, or 3.8 percent, to \$218.73.

Meanwhile, bond prices fell



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, February 18, 2010.
REUTERS/Brendan McDermid

on signs of the improving economy. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note, which moves opposite its price, rose to 3.69 percent from 3.61 percent late Thursday.

The dollar fell against other major currencies, while gold

rose.

The Russell 2000 index of smaller companies rose 10.55, or 1.6 percent, to 663.02.

Overseas markets rose on the U.S. jobs report, and after a successful bond sale by debt-burdened Greece. Budget and debt problems in Greece have

dogged the markets in recent months.

Britain's FTSE 100 rose 1.3 percent, Germany's DAX index gained 1.4 percent, and France's CAC-40 rose 2.1 percent. Japan's Nikkei stock average surged 2.2 percent.

Unemployment rate unchanged as 36K jobs lost

By CHRISTOPHER S. RUGABER,
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — The unemployment rate held at 9.7 percent in February as employers shed 36,000 jobs, fewer than expected. The figures suggested the job market is slowly healing but that significant hiring has yet to occur. The Labor Department wouldn't quantify how the snowstorms that hammered the East Coast last month affected job losses. Economists said the storms probably inflated job losses but by less than predictions of 100,000 or more. Without the storms, the economy likely would have seen a net jobs gain in February for only the second time since the recession began two years ago.

Doubts about last month's data arose because the snowstorms occurred on the same week that the government surveys

businesses about their payrolls. Employees who couldn't make it to work and weren't paid weren't included on those payrolls.

"It looks like the impact of weather was not as large as we thought it would be," said Marisa DiNatale, an economist at Moody's Economy.com.

Some economists said the data suggest that the job market is now pointed in the right direction and that the unemployment rate may have peaked. Nigel Gault, chief economist at IHS Global Insight, said private employers will likely add jobs in March and continue to generate jobs for the rest of the year. Still, hiring is likely to be weak for much of that time. The recession eliminated about 8.4 million jobs. And it takes 100,000 new jobs per month just to keep up with population growth and keep the unemployment rate from rising.

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Bears sign Peppers, but few spending sprees in NFL

By RACHEL COHEN

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK — The Chicago Bears were big spenders as NFL teams entered the free agency period unconstrained by a salary cap, signing top prize Julius Peppers.

The rest of the league was more thrifty Friday, with lots of moves involving some big names but no other blockbuster deals.

The Bears also added running back Chester Taylor from Minnesota and blocking tight end Brandon Manumaleuna from San Diego.

Bears general manager Jerry Angelo and coach Lovie Smith know they'd better win now after missing the playoffs the past three years. Then again, a big move didn't work out for them before last season, when they landed quarterback Jay Cutler yet went 7-9.

"It's one thing to play football in this league and make a living, but it's a totally different thing to come to a place with a rich tradition like the Bears," Peppers said.

The five-time Pro Bowl defensive end agreed to a six-year deal worth potentially \$91.5 million. Agent Carl Carey said a record \$42 million is guaranteed, with Peppers earning \$20 million in the first year.

Continued on page 15



Quarterback Jake Delhomme wipes tears from his eyes as he discusses being cut from the Carolina Panthers NFL football team during a news conference in Charlotte, N.C. Friday, March 5, 2010. Associated Press

NHL Roundup

Coyotes' Wolski punishes old team Avalanche

GLENDAL, Arizona (AP) — Wojtek Wolski beat his former Colorado teammates in his Phoenix debut, scoring the go-ahead goal with 22 seconds left as the Coyotes beat the Avalanche 3-1 in the NHL on Thursday. Wolski joined the Coyotes on Wednesday in one of the seven deals the team pulled off before the trading deadline. Lee Stempniak, acquired from Toronto on Wednesday, scored for the Coyotes in the first period, and Radim Vrbata added an empty-net goal as Phoenix moved into third place in the Western Conference standings, three points above Colorado. John-Michael Liles

scored a power-play goal for the Avalanche in the second period. **Capitals 5, Lightning 4** In Washington, Scott Walker scored twice in three minutes of the third period in his first game with Washington, leading the Capitals over Tampa Bay. Walker, acquired from Carolina on Wednesday, scored the winner off a rebound with 6:51 left. Mike Knuble scored two and Eric Fehr also netted to help the Capitals run their home winning streak to 12 games. Vincent Lecavalier scored twice for the Lightning, Steven Stamkos added his 38th goal of the season, and Steve Downie also scored.

Sharks 3, Canadiens 2 In San Jose, California, San Jose move two points clear atop the Western Conference by downing Montreal. Dany Heatley scored the tying goal and Manny Malhotra delivered the winner in a 2:33 span in the third period. Patrick Marleau scored a short-handed goal for the Sharks, coming off their first back-to-back regulation losses of the season. Scott Gomez and Brian Gionta scored for Montreal. **Predators 4, Kings 2** In Nashville, Tennessee, J.P. Dumont, Jason Arnott, Marcel Goc and Jerred Smithson scored as Nashville



Colorado Avalanche left winger T.J. Galiardi, left, reacts as his former teammate and Phoenix Coyotes left winger Wojtek Wolski, of Poland, celebrates his go-ahead goal with 22 seconds left in the third period of an NHL hockey game Thursday, March 4, 2010, in Glendale, Ariz. The Coyotes won 3-1. Associated Press

overcame Los Angeles. Pekka Rinne made 20 saves for the Predators, who notched a sixth straight win over Los Angeles, which had won 11 of its previous 13 games. The Kings' goals came from Alexander Frolov

and Drew Doughty. **Penguins 5, Rangers 4, OT** In New York, Evgeni Malkin scored a power-play goal 3:42 into overtime to lift Pittsburgh over New York.

Continued on page 14

Kim, Villegas tied for lead after Honda second round

TIM REYNOLDS

AP Sports Writer

PALM BEACH

GARDENS, Florida (AP) — Anthony Kim and Camilo Villegas led at the midpoint of the Honda Classic, tied at 8-under 132 and one shot ahead of Vijay Singh on Friday.

Kim was one of four players to match the best round on the Champion course with a 64, and Villegas shot 66 for the second straight day, when the only thing that improved more than the weather on Friday was the scoring.

“Trust me, it’s a tough golf course,” Villegas said.

Maybe so, but since the Honda moved to the Jack Nicklaus redesign in 2007, there’s never been an easier day to get around.

Singh (66) was a stroke back at 7 under, Jerry Kelly (65) was alone in fourth at 6 under, and a fivesome of players — Mike Weir, Matt Every, Graeme McDowell, Chez Reavie and first-round co-leader Nathan Green — all will enter the weekend three shots off the lead.

“I think we got the favorable wind today,” Stephen Ames said.

Everybody did. Thursday was marked by wind gusts over 30 mph; Friday merely had occasionally strong breezes and little else.

It showed in the scoring. Entering Friday, there had been 1,445 competitive Honda rounds played at PGA National, with just two rounds of 64: Luke Donald in 2008 and Greg Chalmers in 2009. On Friday alone, there were four — with Ames, Paul Casey, Weir and Kim all getting there.

“Probably only about half

a club of wind, which was nice at times,” said Ames, who is 3 under entering the weekend. “A lot different than it was yesterday.”

It didn’t start that way. A record low for the date of 39 degrees was recorded early Friday, and a brisk northwest wind made the air feel downright frosty when play started.

Then the scoring spree began. The nine players within three shots of the lead combined to shoot 37 under — including an even-par 70 by Green and McDowell getting penalized two strokes.

“It’s very, very tough,” Casey said. “Not necessarily enjoyable, but that’s what we require out here.”

Forecasters say wind gusts topping 20 mph are expected for Saturday.

Wind, no wind, Villegas is playing the course the same way anyway.

“There’s not too many birdies out there,” Villegas insisted. “And you have some really tough holes. You’ve just got to be careful.”

He made few mistakes; the most grievous might have been hitting his tee ball into the water on the par-3 15th, and Villegas minimized the damage by rolling in a 15-footer for bogey. He strung together four straight birdies later in the round, getting to 9 under at one point.

Afterward, he held a giant energy drink bottle, possibly for good reason. He flew from Phoenix to Miami to Bogota on Monday, had a nearly nonstop 36 hours of events built around the Nationwide Tour Pacific Rubiales Bogota Open — the first U.S. PGA Tour-

sanctioned event in his home country — before heading back to South Florida for the Honda.

“It’s been a long week but it’s been a good one,” Villegas said. “Having the first Nationwide Tour event in Colombia is awesome. It’s a dream come true for my country. It’s a dream come true for myself. It’s great for Latin American golf and hopefully it’s the beginning of some other countries hosting big events.”



Anthony Kim lines up a putt on the 18th green during the second round at the Honda Classic golf tournament in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., Friday, March 5, 2010.

Associated Press

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NBA Roundup

Jazz finish hard, beat Suns

PHOENIX (AP) — The Utah Jazz piled on 41 points in the fourth quarter to overhaul a 12-point final period deficit and beat the Phoenix Suns 116-108 in the NBA on Thursday.

Deron Williams scored 13 of his 27 points in the last, and Mehmet Okur added 24 for Utah, which trailed 98-86 early in the fourth quarter, then reeled off 12 straight points, capped by a 3-pointer by Okur to tie the game.

They took the lead for good on a 3-pointer by Williams with 1:36 remaining that made it 109-106.

The game was reminiscent of the teams' first meeting this season when the Jazz came back from a 17-point deficit

to win.

Carlos Boozer had 15 points and 15 rebounds for Utah, which moved back within a game of Northwest Division leader Denver.

Amare Stoudemire scored 30 points for the second consecutive game for Phoenix. Heat 114, Lakers 111, OT

In Miami, the hosts overcame a huge game by Kobe Bryant to beat Los Angeles in overtime.

Dwyane Wade had 27 points and 14 assists and Quentin Richardson scored a season-high 25 for Miami in a game which set a new high for lead changes this season at 31.

Bryant scored 39 points, including the overtime-forcing basket for the Lakers, who got 14 points from Derek Fisher.

It still wasn't enough, as the Heat was 4 for 4 from the field and 7 for 8 from the foul line in overtime.

Grizzlies 105, Bulls 96

In Chicago, Memphis fought back from a big first-half deficit to beat Chicago.

Zach Randolph scored 31 points and grabbed 18 rebounds for the Grizzlies, who trailed by 17 in the second quarter and finally took control with an 8-0 run late in the fourth that gave them a 97-90 lead.

O.J. Mayo scored 10 of his 20 points

in the final quarter as Memphis extended its franchise-record road winning streak to six and sent Chicago to its third straight loss.

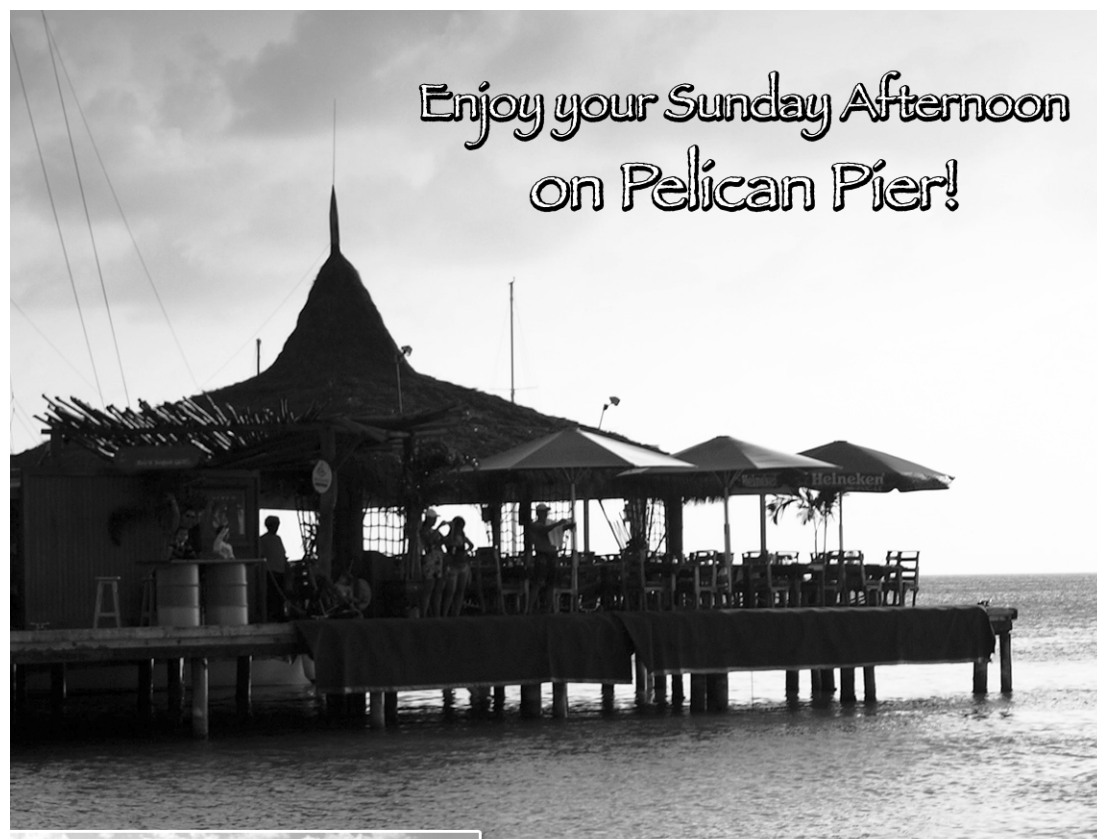


Miami Heat guard Dwyane Wade, left, talks with Los Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant, right, in overtime during an NBA basketball game in Miami, Thursday, March 4, 2010. The Heat won 114-111 in overtime.

Associated Press

The Bulls wasted a solid Memphis 105, Chicago 96; performances by Luol Deng, Miami 114, L.A. Lakers 111, who got 23 points despite OT; and Utah 116, Phoenix nursing a knee injury. 108.

In other NBA games it was,



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NHL Roundup

Continued from page 12

Earlier in overtime, Malkin had hit a post and seen another shot stopped by the outstretched glove of Henrik Lundqvist, but his winner came on Pittsburgh's 55th shot of the game at the Rangers goalie. Lundqvist's 50 saves were a career high. Pittsburgh held the Rangers to 16 shots overall and only one after the second period. The Penguins went 5-1 against their Atlantic Division rivals this season. New York had a three-game winning streak snapped. Alex Goligoski, Chris Kunitz, Jordan Staal and Mike Rupp also scored for Pittsburgh. Brandon Dubinsky, Chris Drury, Artem Anisimov and Michal Rozsival scored for New York.

Blues 6, Stars 1

In Dallas, St. Louis extended its winning streak to a season-best five games by routing Dallas. Paul Kariya scored twice, combining with teammate Brad Boyes for a pair of goals during a 17-second span of the first period. Alexander Steen, Patrik Berglund and T.J. Oshie added goals for the Blues. Loui Eriksson scored for Dallas.

Hurricanes 4, Senators 1

In Raleigh, North Carolina, Carolina's winning run stretched to seven games with victory over Ottawa. Tom Kostopoulos and Rod Brind'Amour netted within 65 seconds of the first period, and Manny Legace made 25 saves. Chad LaRose and Brandon Sutter also scored for Carolina. Former Hurricane Matt Cullen, traded to Ottawa on Feb. 12, scored for the Senators.

Continued from page 12

Linebacker Gary Brackett, the leader of the Indianapolis defense, re-signed with the Colts. All-Pro fullback Leonard Weaver re-signed with Philadelphia for three years.

Cornerback Antonio Cromartie, a former All-Pro who struggled in coverage last season for San Diego, was traded to the New York Jets. Receiver Anquan Boldin was traded from the Arizona Cardinals to the Baltimore Ravens.

Detroit, coming off two

wins in the past two seasons, upgraded its defense by trading with Cleveland for tackle Corey Williams and agreeing to a four-year deal with end Kyle Vanden Bosch. The Cleveland Browns restructured the final three years of the six-year deal Pro Bowl return specialist Josh Cribbs signed in 2006.

Carolina waived longtime starting quarterback Jake Delhomme — in teary fashion.

A year after the Panthers gave Delhomme a lucrative contract extension, the only quarterback to lead them to the Super Bowl was released



The Chicago Bears introduced recently signed free agents, from left, running back Chester Taylor, defensive end Julius Peppers, and tight end Brandon Manumaleuna during an NFL football news conference at Halas Hall on Friday, March 5, 2010, in Lake Forest, Ill.

Associated Press

to make way for new starter Matt Moore. A career-high 18 interceptions in 2009 and 23 in his final 12 games did in Delhomme.

Coach John Fox twice welled up with tears in explaining the decision, which came despite the fact Carolina still owes Delhomme more than \$12.5 million in guaranteed money. “He’s done some great things for this team. Two (NFC) championship games, a Super Bowl, all those comeback victories,” Fox said. “I’m not sure I’ve had any more respect for an NFL football player than Jake Delhomme.”

Brackett wasn’t going anywhere, nor did he want to. The defensive captain signed a five-year deal hours after he officially became an unrestricted free agent. Brackett’s new deal is likely to

keep the 29-year-old in a Colts uniform the rest of his career. “Obviously, this is a great place to play and when you get a chance to stay a Colt for life, you usually jump at it,” Brackett said. “That’s why I wanted to do everything within my power to make this my home.”

Weaver certainly found a home in Philadelphia after playing four years for Seattle. Weaver had a career-high 323 yards rushing, 140 yards receiving and four touchdowns in his first season with the Eagles. Vanden Bosch was made to feel right at home by Lions coach Jim Schwartz, who previously worked with the defensive end in Tennessee as the Titans’ coordinator. Schwartz waited outside Vanden Bosch’s Nashville house when free agency began

at midnight, and in a few hours they had struck a deal.

A nine-year veteran, Vanden Bosch spent the past five seasons with the Titans, getting all of his 43 1/2 career sacks.

Cromartie should become a starter opposite All-Pro Darrelle Revis in the Jets’ secondary. New York gave up a conditional draft pick for a former All-Pro who has had off-field issues.

But Jets coach Rex Ryan is known for getting production from such players.

The Cardinals received a third- and fourth-round pick in the 2010 draft for the 29-year-old Boldin. He caught 84 passes for 1,024 yards and two touchdowns last season and gives quarterback Joe Flacco a much-needed deep threat.



Dale Earnhardt Jr. climbs out of his car after qualifying for Sunday’s NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Kobalt Tools 500 auto race at Atlanta Motor Speedway in Hampton, Ga., Friday, March 5, 2010. Earnhardt will start on the pole.

Associated Press

Junior on the pole for Atlanta race

By PAUL NEWBERRY

AP Sports Writer

HAMPTON, Ga. — Dale Earnhardt Jr. is on the pole for the first time in nearly two years. He’s hoping it will lead to Victory Lane.

Earnhardt claimed the pole Friday night for the Kobalt Tools 500 at Atlanta Motor Speedway with a blistering speed of 192.761 mph. It will be the first time Junior has taken green at the head of a Sprint Cup field since the April 2008 race at Texas.

“It’s good to be on the pole and I’m real proud of it,” Earnhardt said. “Getting a pole anywhere is good for our team. We’re so hungry to do well on Sunday.”

He’s coming off a miserable season in which he failed to win a race, cracked the top 10 only five times, led a mere 146 laps in 36 races and finished 25th in the overall standings — despite racing for Hendrick Motorsports, the best team in the business.

After a major shake-up within his group, Earnhardt is hoping to be a Chase contender in 2010. He hasn’t won a race since June 15, 2008, at Michigan.

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Could Pacquiao be done with boxing after Clottey?

GREG BEACHAM

AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The frantic ferocity of Manny Pacquiao's training camps at the stuffy Wild Card Gym clearly indicate he feels every fight could be his last.

This time around, Pacquiao knows he really might be done with boxing — for a while at least.

Pacquiao is training in Hollywood for his March 13 fight against Joshua Clottey while simultaneously running for a congressional seat in his native Philippines. It's the latest move in his exhaustive quest apparently to become all things to all people in a homeland that already has embraced him as a boxing champion, a commercial pitchman, a movie star, a singer and its most famous person.

But if he beats Clottey on March 13 and then gets



Manny Pacquiao, of the Philippines, works out with his trainer, Freddie Roach, during workouts in front of the media in Los Angeles Wednesday, March 3, 2010. Pacquiao is training for his welterweight bout against Joshua Clottey, scheduled for March 13 at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas.

Associated Press

elected eight weeks later, as many expect, how can he balance a burgeoning political career with the months of intense training necessary for a former flyweight to survive bigger opponents such as Miguel Cotto, Oscar De La Hoya and Clottey?

"I don't know, but I can still fight," the 31-year-old Pacquiao said Wednesday while getting his hands wrapped in a cramped back room. "Boxing is different than politics. Politics is more in service. ... I want to be a good public servant. I want to help people."

Promoter Bob Arum understands the lure of public service after working as a lawyer in the Justice Department during the Kennedy administration, but Pacquiao's determination to join Congress at the height of his athletic career is perplexing to the man who shepherded Pacquiao from obscurity.

"I can't figure it out," Arum said. "I tried very lightly to dissuade him this time. I know people around him have tried also. He's determined to do it."

If Pacquiao is elected this spring after his bout in Dallas, trainer Freddie Roach and Arum have come to terms with the possibility that the combination of Pacquiao's political responsibilities and his struggle to land a megafight with Floyd Mayweather Jr. could keep him out of the ring for a while — perhaps permanently.

"It could be our last fight, sure," Roach said. "I don't think it will, but it could definitely work out that way."

Pacquiao (50-3-2, 38 KOs), generally considered the world's top pound-for-pound fighter, will meet Clottey (35-3, 21 KOs) at Cowboys Stadium in front of a huge crowd lured by Pacquiao's star power and reasonably priced tickets — a bonus that particularly appeals to Pacquiao, who rose from abject poverty to the pinnacle of his sport.

Arum said Pacquiao feels deeply compelled to give back to his country for his good fortune. Even after giving away millions of his boxing winnings to charities, family, friends and strangers who stand outside his house in the Philippines waiting days to catch a glimpse of him, he seems to believe the best way is through elected office — even if many of his Filipino fans apparently disagree.

He failed in an attempt to win a congressional seat in May 2007, losing by a lopsided margin. His latest run, which will be decided in the Philippines' general election on May 10, has a much better chance of succeeding, according to Arum and political observers.

"He's lived in the U.S., and he's seen how people live here, and the relative affluence here," Arum said. "As a caring individual, that has to upset him. He genuinely wants to make a difference in those people's lives, and I guess he thinks politics is how to do that."

Roach has risen along with Pacquiao to the top of his profession, but he would rather see his greatest

fighter leave at his apex than on a decline. Roach also realizes a fighter of Pacquiao's stature has little to gain beyond money, unless he finds an opponent worthy of his skills.

"I did have a discussion with Manny about it," Roach said over the shouts of his brother, Pepper, ordering somebody to move a car that's blocking a spot in the Wild Card's minuscule parking lot. "We didn't come up with an answer. It's more about the opponents. If Mayweather beats (Sugar Shane) Mosley and then won't fight Manny, who else is there? (A third fight with) Juan Manuel Marquez? Maybe Edwin Valero? People really want to see Manny-Mayweather."

Mayweather and Pacquiao have tried to avoid talking about each other while preparing for their respective spring bouts, but the fight still is the favorite topic in every boxing conversation. Their negotiations fell apart over Mayweather's insistence on extra-stringent drug testing, a stance interpreted by Arum and others as a reluctance to take on Pacquiao.

Roach still wants to see the fight come together later this year. Indeed, Arum agrees Congressman Pacquiao still would be able to train, noting the Filipino legislative body meets in July and adjourns until the end of the year.

"If he gets elected, I'm sure he'll still get time off for training camp," Roach said. "The government shuts down when he fights anyway. The terrorists call a treaty and stop fighting. I think I could get him away for eight weeks."



On Top Of The News

Email: news@arubatoday.com

Saturday, March 6, 2010

According to her commander Captain Peter Reesink

Dutch Frigate Van Speijk ready to protect local waters against all crimes



ORANJESTAD – Her Majesty van Speijk of the Dutch Navy was received with all honors on Aruba upon her call at our ports. Van Speijk came to Aruba as part of her duties to combat drug trafficking in the region. Commander Navy Lieutenant Captain Peter Reesink explained the frigate will be operating in the Antillean and Aruban waters

in the coming weeks. “We are working with the Antillean and Aruban Coastguard, and will be patrolling for drugs and controlling ships using these waters.” HM van Speijk will remain in port here in Oranjestad until Sunday afternoon. The ship is a multi functional frigate and has a crew of 155 persons on board, including the

helicopter crew, who according to Captain Reesink are totally motivated to do their jobs varying from drug patrols to territory defense. The mission of the vessel is among others to secure the safety of all borders of the Dutch Kingdom including its countries. The ship therefore is also well equipped for military actions.

Reesink said the HM van Speijk left The Netherlands at the end of last January and arrived in Curaçao in the middle of February, which allowed for the crew to acclimatize with the region. The ship will be conducting its responsibilities in the region until June, upon which she will return to The Netherlands for the mandatory inspection round.

Captain Reesink, who is on his last mission before retirement, said HM van Speijk and her entire crew is ready to act when and if necessary and has already been engaged in operations to halt illegalities on sea. Navy Lieutenant Captain Reesink himself led interventions on sea near Trinidad & Tobago where a large amount of drugs was seized. According to him, it is not unusual for Coastguard vessels to be engaged in various actions in a short period while experiencing relative



tranquility on the seas in others. HM van Speijk also recently participated in humanitarian activities. She was sent to Haiti with relief supplies and military personnel from Aruba, right after the devastating earthquake there. The crew had just

completed a comprehensive disaster training in England before departing for the Caribbean, which meant that the crew was well prepared to handle the chaos immediately following the earthquake in Haiti.



Renaissance Marks Employee Anniversaries

ORANJESTAD – A special cocktail party at the Renaissance Convention Center marked the anniversaries of a record number of employees, celebrating a career mile stone during the last quarter of 2009, working for the Renaissance Marina Hotel and the Renaissance Beach Suites. General Manager Paul Gielen shared the occasion with other hotel executive praising his team's long term commitments to hospitality and their loyalty to the Renaissance properties in the heart of town.

Among those celebrating the 5 year career mark Sandra van Wijk, Stewarding; Zenaida Polonia, Cafeteria Marina Hotel; Ricardo Pereira, L.G. Smith's Steak & Chop House; Felicia Donata, Kitchen; Margarita Hernandez, Main Kitchen; Francis Ras, Main Kitchen ; Geordino Ruiz, L.G. Smith's Steak & Chop House; Juan Onate, Security; Gladys Dania, Security; Raquel Muyale, Accounting; Vanie Dinzey, Renaissance Private Island; Miroushka Statia, Accounting; Cesar Caradenas, Housekeeping Marina Hotel and Fernando Orihuela, Renaissance Convention Center.

Among those celebrating the 10 year career mark Vasco Goncalves, Landscaping and Anushka Blom, Security. Among those celebrating their 15 year career mark Reynold Simon, L.G. Smith's Steak & Chop House; Robert Kock, Room Service, and Iraida Hernandez, Blue Bar.

Zoyla Croeze and Sharron Wilson, both from the Accounting were recognized by their peers and by members of management for their twenty years of service, having dedicated two decades of their lives to the company.

Pictured here, the recognition ceremony at the Renaissance Convention Center.



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PALM BEACH – The health and calorie conscious among us need fear steakhouses no more. Whether it's a low-carb, low-fat, or even vegetarian diet you follow, Texas de Brazil Churrascaria fits into just about every dieter's menu plan.

Low carb eaters will have all their expectations surpassed with a tempting carnivorous selection of umpteen cuts of sizzling beef, pork, lamb, sausage, and poultry. The meats are prepared in the healthiest style of cooking—slow roasting—where much of the fat drips off in the roasting process, so those looking for a lower fat option to sautéing, pan frying, or deep frying will also be able to indulge.

The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but Texas de Brazil's version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, homemade soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, Texas de Brazil will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

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Monday - Sat 6 pm - 11 pm
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For more information or to make reservations, please call 586-4686. ☐



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At Divi Aruba Phoenix Beach Resort

Distinguished island visitors honored



PALM BEACH — A joyous occasion at Pure Beach, Divi Aruba Phoenix Beach Resort, brought together repeat visitors Carol & Michael Houle, Carol Anziano & Eugene Guidetti and Eileen Bishop and Ekambaram Ilamathi.

For their loyalty to the island of Aruba

as their preferred vacation destination, the visitors were each presented a Distinguished Visitor award.

The informal ceremony was affected by the representative of the Aruba Tourism Authority, Francis Jacobs.

Jacobs warmly awarded the VIPs their

certificates on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, in gratitude for their support of the island and devotion to its people.

Lillian Maduro representing the Divi Phoenix management team, arranged for a friendly toast and delicious hors d'oeuvres to mark the festive occasion.



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Louis Vuitton expresses expertise in sunglasses



ORANJESTAD -- Louis Vuitton has been expressing its expertise in the production of sunglasses since 2005. Like the other products, the eyewear is exclusively manufactured for Louis Vuitton by optical craftsmen from the French region of Morez, the Jura and Italy's Cadore region. The eyewear is sold exclusively in the Louis Vuitton network. The acetate frames have been developed by hand to obtain the house colors reminiscent of the leather goods lines - crafted by the most experienced of eyeswear makers, LV sunglasses provide a reliable protection against solar UV radiation combining new technology and high quality, the lens benefit from special treatments: Photochromy and

Polarization. The finishes on the hinges have been carefully crafted to form perfect LV initials.

The styles have been created by a design department using a unique three-dimensional process - designed by Marc Jacobs, the sunglasses line takes its inspiration from the house codes: the Monogram flowers feature in the design for the women's styles, while the Damier check appears in the collection for men - the Summer 2010 collection takes on a seventies feel with an injection of arty Technicolor. It is illustrated by the portrait gallery (shown below) by Parisian and New York trendsetters. The collection is exclusively available from Louis Vuitton

stores on March 2010.

I n s p i r a t i o n :
The inspiration for the 2010 SS collection is a blend of the natural world with myriad amazing details contrasted with the technological world of experimentation and innovation. The women's collection develops the Floral monogram world, taking its inspiration from nature with a language of soft, sinuous lines and volumes, appealing to different types of women: from the elegant woman drawn by the sparkle of stones to the sophisticated seductive woman to the cool, trendy woman.

The men's collection develops the Damier graphic world, taking its inspiration from avant-garde contemporary architecture and appealing to the classic man, the casual, avant-garde man and the extravagant, egocentric man. This collection is packed with technological content with 3D hinges, original arm end details and pure lines. Colors range from black to honey tortoiseshell to lilac to multicolored, which is where the "Rainbow" name for the collection came from.



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On the eve of the restaurant's 10th anniversary

Amazonia Churrascaria introduces a new dining option

PALM BEACH – At a recent press conference at Amazonia Churrascaria General Manager Hubert Solagnier, Assistant Restaurant Manager Carolina Raven, Chef Victor Olivares and Director of Marketing Irma Bijen, introduced press members to an additional new restaurant feature, a la carte dining.

“We are gearing up for the restaurant’s



10th anniversary,” explained Solagnier, “Almost one decade ago, when we first opened, the authentic Brazilian concept of Rodizio Steakhouse offering continuous dining became instantly popular. Today at the 10 year mark, we’re introducing a fresh

and novel style of dining, namely, a la carte, available to both locals and visitors.” “The a la carte option,” added Raven, “is designed to satisfy small eaters, and patrons with distinct menu favorites, who just wish to order a skewer or two of their preferred item.”



Effective this week, diners have more choices at Amazonia Churrascaria. They may opt for the traditional, continuous

parade of gauchos, slicing more than 14 cuts of grilled beef, chicken, lamb, pork & sausage, or the new a la carte dinner option, where their favorite skewer – from Grilled Pineapple, to Parmesan Pork, Filet Mignon Wrapped in Bacon, Lamb Chop, or the Mixed Amazonia Skewer with tenderloin and vegetables, and the Passion Skewer with six jumbo shrimp -- is delivered to the table, seasoned to perfection and slow roasted over open flame, in the restaurant’s signature style. Both dining styles are accompanied by an extravagant forty-item, frequently changing seasonal salad bar where patrons can keep sampling until they beg for mercy, and a delicious array of tasty sides.

restaurant offers a local special on Saturday & Sunday, granting terrific value for money to local patrons.”

The last to speak at the press conference was chef Olivares who introduced the menu and saw to it that the press was treated to a generous sampling of Amazonia’s famous baby back ribs, marinated in rum and sugar cane!

With two choices, an all-inclusive feast and an a la carte delight, diners can now better tailor the Amazonia Churrascaria culinary adventure, to their liking, combined with the restaurant’s extensive award-winning Wine Spectator wine list, well stocked bar and terrific selection of Cuban cigars.

Pictured here, the press conference at Amazonia Churrascaria.



“While the a la carte option is new,” added Bijen, “the

Party Animals take care of the Fun

Factor at Palm Beach Plaza Food Court

PALM BEACH - The Party Animals and their fun makers were out in force at the sparkling new, spectacular Palm Beach Plaza Food Court last Saturday afternoon. Located on the second floor of the upscale shopping mall, there were lots of children who came to join the games, have their faces painted and eat a few delicious snacks. The Palm Beach Plaza Food Court offers churros, an Argentinian grill, Asian food, Italian finger foods, chicken, shoarma, falafel and burgers, so options galore.

While the Party Animals were busy organizing a ball game which involved intriguing movements, we found 4 year-old Mariana getting her face painted. Before our eyes, this gorgeous little girl changed into a butterfly... A bit further away, two boys got their faces painted with more manly designs.

Every Saturday there will be activities on the Palm Beach Plaza's Food Court, so keep your hunger pangs in check and wait for your visit to Churromania, Beef?Es, Chubby Panda, Sciue Sciue, bon Chicken, Shoarma Express or American Burger to eat your fill.

The Plaza Food Court at Palm Beach Plaza is open from noon until 3 pm and from 6 to 10 pm; the mall itself is open from 2 pm until 10 pm.



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Matinee: sat - sun | Late show: fri & sat

Aruba's new hotspot is Lola's Lounge



Eagle Beach – You will be surprised, but the old/new lobby bar at Costa Linda Beach Resort is totally transformed, transitioning from a sleepy kiosk to a hopping hotspot, since it was taken over by the management of El Gaucho Restaurant & Garufa Cigar & Cocktail Lounge. The new Lola's Lounge has

been taken over just recently and has since started mixing cocktails and serving as the social hub for guests staying in the area. The place has never before been so lively, as every day from 4 to 6 p.m., Happy Hour is celebrated with great flair and enthusiasm. One of the lounge's main attractions, besides the

expert Garufa bartenders, is the musical entertainment program, featuring a different attraction every day of the week with Heritage Duo live on Sunday, Karaoke on Monday, Garufa's Jazz trio live, on Tuesday, Guitar Man Maxximilian, on Wednesday, Mr. Golden Oldies Dennis Zeppenfeldt on Thursday and Saturday and the Dushi Duo live on Friday. Guests staying at the resort report the lounge is groovy, expecting nothing less from Lola's Lounge management, already famous for its other popular businesses in town, El Gaucho restaurant & Garufa Cigar & Cocktail Lounge. "Lola's Lounge," says owner Omira Botta, "is our new baby, drop in anytime, we're still decorating, but the party switch is already flicked on."



Sun Specs offers the world's most recognized brands of sunglasses



PALM BEACH – Sun Specs Aruba is preparing for its official opening party on April 15. Notwithstanding the store has been open for business for the past two weeks, offering an extensive collection of the world's most popular styles, including many iconic looks. The spacious, brightly lit boutique displays stylish

Gucci sunglasses, also bold and dramatic designs by Ed Hardy, classics by Oliver People, trendy Prada shields, hot Versace aviators, Chanel exclusives, including the latest Perle Collection, distinctive Dior models including registered limited editions, elegant Dolce & Gabbana, innovative Maui Jim &

Oakley, for cycling, driving or sailing, practical Vogue, luxurious Chopard for women who are passionate about fashion, and the evergreen Ray Ban, in style, en-vogue since 1937!

As you walk into Sun Specs, one pair of sunglasses is not enough, says Arthur, the super knowledgeable store manager. And looking at the gorgeous sunglass displays many fine details reveal themselves, including vivid graphics, special diamond encrusted and pearl strung temples and handles, embellishments such as Swarovski crystals, leather, denim, vintage hinges, combined with excellent UV protection, light weight materials, increased comfort and durability, and lenses which are abrasion resistant to prevent scratching, in short science meets fashion at Sun Specs Aruba sunglass boutique. Visitors are invited to browse the selection and consult the store staff, at Sun Specs you are guaranteed to get the authentic product, delivered directly from the original manufacturer, at a fair price.

The great & friendly customer service before and after the sale, enhance the experience... you'll want to return for another pair and tell your family members and friends.



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PALM BEACH - STEINFELD presents WOW factor! at the MAGIC LIVE!® ...theater-of-illusions show, Westin - Aruba opened on December 25 at 9PM. MAGIC Live!® theater-of-illusions show, starring Adam Steinfeld... is an amazing night of Magic, Grand Illusions and Comedy, superb magic at it's

highest level, a lot of fun from start to finish, laugh-out-loud funny, intelligent, sophisticated, unconventional grand illusions, that will keep you asking, 'how the heck did he do that?' Perfect for the holiday season, have you ever dreamed of disappearing and reappearing in an instant? Master illusionist, comedy magician, Adam Steinfeld opened DEC 25, MagicLive show at the WESTIN, Aruba, nightly 9PM, every night, doors open at 8:30PM, and tickets may be purchased at the door, in the intimate Magic Live! theater-of-illusions theater, every seat is close to the stage.

In his new illusion he calls; "PRESENT", a tall girl steps into a tiny box, elevated in-the-air, the box spins 360 degrees,

then the sections are taken away, one by one, until the girl vanishes completely... right before your eyes!

Then as if that isn't enough to run to your local optometrist, he re-assembles the box for the magicbabe to make a triumphant reappearance. It's an all new original illusion not seen anywhere else in the world.

I went back to see the show during rehearsals, and still couldn't figure out the secret.

Tourists and local fans will remember Steinfeld for past performances, in Aruba,



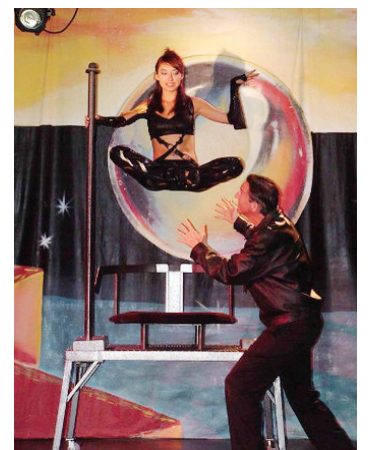
and on network television, Mr. Steinfeld recently authored "the Houdini Conspiracy", aka "Houdini Lives!", a collaborated work with new england mystery writer

Al Blanchard, he believes will be turned into a feature film.

The intimate Magic Live!® theater-of-illusions showroom is located just off the lobby of the Westin-Aruba in high-rise area, j.e. irausquin boulevard 77. Palm Beach, Aruba. Magic Live!® BOX

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SEE MAGIC, comedy and "seemingly impossible feats, get ready to marvel at the all new, MAGIC! theater-of-illusions show starring ADAM STEINFELD, opens DECEMBER, 25, nightly 9PM at the WESTIN, aruba. MAGIC LIVE! theater-of-illusions show...at the WESTIN-Aruba, 9pm nightly, starring AdamSteinfeld. □

**IF YOU GO**

What: Magic Live! theater-of-illusions show
Where: Westin - Aruba, palm beach (high-rise area)
Who: starring, comedy illusionist, Adam Steinfeld
Time: 9:00 pm, theater opens at 8:30pm
Tickets: at the door
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St. Maarten Heineken Regatta:

Elandra wins Gill Commodores Cup

Calvin Reed's Elandra, a production Beneteau First 40.7, has won the Gill Commodore's Cup. Reed and team, sailing in the highly competitive Racing B class at this opening event of the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta, managed to hold off not only similar designs such as a J/120 and a couple of A40s, but also five other First 40.7s. At a special prizegiving ceremony at Port De Plaisance, Nick Gill – company chairman – presented the delighted team with a selection of Gill products including a Gill Regatta Master starting watch and kit bag.

Now in its sixth year, and held

Simpson Bay, and the fleets was treated to a day of light to moderate, tactical, patchy conditions on a relatively large rolling sea which made for an interesting warm-up to the regatta.

The glamorous head-turners such as Irvine Laidlaw's Wally 82 Highland Fling, Tom and Dotty Hill's custom Reichel/Pugh 75 – Titan 15, and Bill Alcott's Andrews 68 – Equation, were also out in force today giving a fair indication of what's in store for the rest of the week. With America's Cup super-stars – Peter Holmberg on the helm of Highland Fling, and Peter Isler driving Titan – it



as a run up to the three-day Heineken Regatta which starts tomorrow, the Gill-sponsored event attracted a bumper entry with a total of 47 boats on the startline. According to Robbie Ferron – event chairman – the boat of the day is calculated by the deltas. 'When we've measured the deltas, in other words the differences in corrected time, the boat that wins the most decisively in the most competitive class is the overall boat of the day. There are some subjective factors here but it allows us to have different courses for the faster and slower boats.'

The two windward/leeward, two-mile courses were set in

wasn't particularly surprising to see these two neck and neck throughout the day. Titan suffered a torn spinnaker in race two but her impressive speed against the powerful, Wally 82 Highland Fling which has a 35m rig, was still enough to secure two first places. Highland Fling took second, while the 10-year-old, stunning looking Equation took a well-deserved third in class. Holmberg commenting on the day's racing said it was a day where pressure was clearly the dominating factor: 'Pretty light airs for the Caribbean. It was a top day to spot the pressure but it was an excellent warm up and we

really felt we improved as the day progressed on the short windward/leeward course. Really looking forward to the start of the regatta tomorrow and I think we'll have some good racing with the likes of Titan and Rambler.' Titan 15, Highland Fling and Rambler are highly comparable new boats incorporating the latest trends in high technology, and also have some smart people among their crew which will make it all the more interesting. Further down the fleet, in Racing C, local sailor Ian Hope-Ross aboard his Beneteau First 36.7 Kick 'Em Jenny hoped to better his runner up class position

from last year but was unable to hold off the Beneteau First 10R, Luxury Girl, and once again had to settle for second overall in class.

In Racing D, Peter Peake's smart looking Reichel Pugh 44 Peake Yacht Services Storm, gave Dave West's Melges 32 Jurakan a good run for her money but was unable to break her impressive 1.1 scoreline and had to settle for second in fleet. Paul Solomon and his team from Trinidad making their racing debut at the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta on a Henderson 35 – Blackberry Enzyme – also had a good day, finishing just behind third-placed Melges 24 – Budget Marine. Solomon says he hopes

to notch up a good result with at least a third place overall at the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta.

After the welcoming party and Gill Commodore's Cup prizegiving, competitors and visitors to the island were treated to a special performance of 'Voices of Classic Rock' – the first of many legendary acts planned for this special 30th anniversary event.

The first race of the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta kicks off tomorrow (Friday 5, March) with the 32nm Round the Island Race scheduled for most classes. However, light winds are forecast once again, which could affect the outcome of the course.

Labour in the Hague rules out Wilders

Labour councillors in the Hague are working towards forming a new executive with the two Liberal parties VVD and D66 and the left-wing greens GroenLinks, the Telegraaf reports on Friday.

Despite losing five seats, Labour remains the biggest party in the Hague, where Geert Wilders' anti-Islam party PVV was second.

Campaign leader Jeltje van Nieuwenhoven told reporters that 'based on party programmes, it will be very difficult to work with the PVV'.

Before the election, Wilders said a ban on headscarves in public buildings would be central to his party's demands.

Immigrant Voters Again Important for PvdA in Local Elections

THE HAGUE, 05/03/10 - local elections. Moroccans city council and the Institute Immigrant voters have again in particular voted for the for Migration and Ethnic provided important support party en masse, according Studies of the University of for Labour (PvdA) in the to research by Amsterdam Amsterdam.

Government has to act on new tariffs, concession for GEBE

~ March 31 loan deadline looms ~

PHILIPSBURG--The Island Government will have to decide on a new tariff structure and concession for utility company GEBE before March 31, for the company to avoid being in default of its loan with Pacific Life and incurring hefty penalty fees.

Managing Director William Brooks and an energy consultant from KEMA briefed the Executive Council Thursday on the proposed new tariff structure that would replace the 50-year-old structure with which GEBE currently operates. While Brooks outlined the results of intense cooperative work between a government task force and GEBE, the urgency to have the tariffs and concession for GEBE was emphasised to the Executive Council.

By agreement with its lender Pacific Life, GEBE and by extension the Island Government had to ensure that a new concession for the company would be in place by January 31, one year prior to the expiration of the current concession.

Realising that this was not going to be achievable, a delegation led by Commissioner in charge of energy Theo Heyliger travelled to California on December 22 to meet with Pacific Life to request an extension of the January 31 deadline. Heyliger was joined by GEBE board chairman Julius Lambert, interim Managing Director at the time Paul Marshall and a legal representative.

The delegation was successful in securing an extension, but only until March 31. The onus now lies with the Executive Council to grant GEBE its concession before March 31. The new tariffs have to be included in this concession and

both will have to go to the Central Committee and ultimately be ratified by the Island Council. Pacific Life will not maintain an agreement with GEBE without risk protection and, in all likelihood, will start issuing penalty-fees if March 31 passes without a concession in place. Brooks and the KEMA consultant explained that the basis of the new tariff structure was to make electricity billing less sensitive to fluctuations in the worldwide price of oil, by operating with a fixed base rate. This base rate will also consider GEBE's operational cost, projected investments, etc. A base rate will also negate dramatic swings in the fuel clause if the price of fuel rises or drops. In other words, consumers will be billed much closer to what they actually use per month. The Executive Council, among other things, also was provided with a history lesson regarding the tariff structure from 1960 and what had happened in 2004 when GEBE started billing the fuel clause based on the use of less-expensive fuel. GEBE believed the message and presentation had been well received by government and hopes to move forward soon with the tariffs and concession.

KEMA is a leading global authority on energy consulting, testing and certification, which is active throughout the entire energy value chain. It plays a major role worldwide in ensuring the availability, reliability, sustainability and profitability of energy and related products and processes. KEMA combines unique expertise and facilities to add value to its customers in the field of risk, performance and quality management.

The PvdA remained the biggest party in Amsterdam by some way, partly due to 74 percent of Moroccans voting for the social democrats. Among Ghanaians, a big group in the Zuidoost district, the figure was even 88 percent. Among Surinamese and Antilleans, the PvdA 'only' won 53 percent, De Volkskrant reported yesterday. It gave no figures for Turks. The PvdA was as always the biggest party in Amsterdam by a long way. But it did drop to 28.9 percent from 39.4 percent. The conservatives (VVD) won some ground (17.1 percent),


as did the leftwing Greens (GroenLinks), to 15.2 percent, while the Socialist Party (SP) vote was halved to 7.4 percent. Centre-left D66 climbed to 14.8 percent from 4.1 percent in Amsterdam. In 2006, the immigrant vote for PvdA was even higher at 80 percent, with only GroenLinks and SP picking up a few crumbs. This time around, D66 was also a competitor. The turnout in Amsterdam among immigrants was similar to four years earlier, ranging from 46 percent among Turks to 26 percent among Surinamese and Antilleans.

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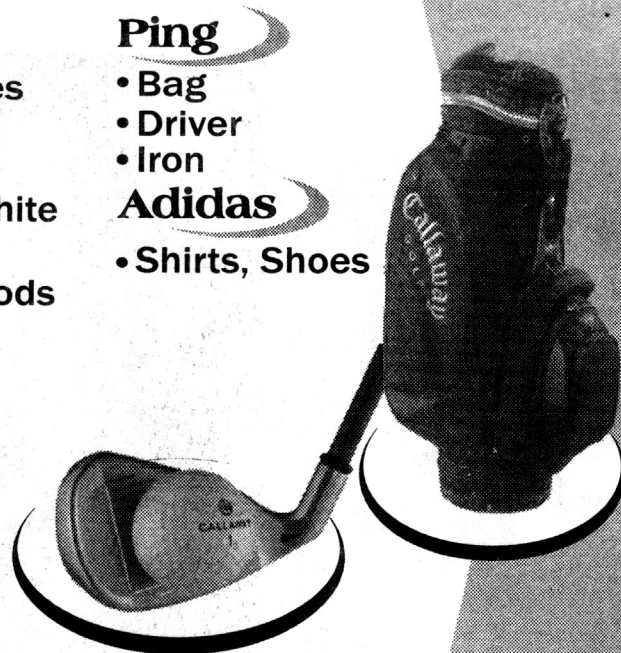
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Lula cree “improcedente” dejar presidencia Brasil por Rousseff

BRASILIA (Reuters) - El presidente de Brasil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, descartó el viernes que esté considerando la posibilidad de dejar su cargo para ayudar a la jefa de Gabinete, Dilma Rousseff, en su campaña presidencial.

El gobernante Partido de los Trabajadores (PT) proclamó como candidata presidencial a Rousseff, quien prometió continuar con la política económica de Lula si gana las elecciones del 3 de octubre, carrera para la cual ocupa el segundo lugar en los últimos sondeos de intención de voto.

“Sería una cosa improcedente que imagine que un presidente de la República fuera a pedir licencia del cargo más importante de Brasil para hacer campaña”, dijo Lula en una entrevista radial.

La posibilidad de alejamiento llegó a ser considerada en

el Gobierno, pero nunca se tomó una decisión en ese sentido, según una fuente del palacio presidencial que habló con Reuters bajo condición de anonimato.

Un artículo del periódico O Globo de esta semana afirmó que Lula quería alejarse de sus funciones entre agosto y septiembre y que el presidente del Senado, José Sarney, asumiría su lugar.

A Sarney le correspondería dado que el vicepresidente José Alencar y el presidente de la Cámara de Diputados, Michel Temer, que son los sucesores constitucionales inmediatos, disputarán las elecciones de este año.

“Creer que alejándome puedo ayudar más a un candidato que estando en la presidencia, sería disminuir al candidato”, dijo Lula, y acusó al reportaje del periódico de “mentiroso”.



Imagen de archivo del presidente de Brasil, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, durante una conferencia de prensa en San Salvador. Feb 26 2010. El presidente de Brasil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, descartó el viernes que esté considerando la posibilidad de dejar su cargo para ayudar a la jefa de Gabinete, Dilma Rousseff, en su campaña presidencial. REUTERS/Stringer

España pide a Venezuela que colabore en caso supuestos nexos ETA

MADRID (Reuters) - España pidió el viernes a Venezuela que colabore con la investigación ordenada por un juez español sobre posibles vínculos de Caracas con el grupo separatista vasco ETA y la guerrilla colombiana de las FARC, un caso que amenaza con desatar una disputa diplomática.

La vicepresidenta primera del Gobierno, María Teresa Fernández de la Vega, defendió la actuación del Ejecutivo de solicitar explicaciones a Venezuela luego de que un juez dijera que Caracas había facilitado contactos entre grupos armados para atentar contra altos funcionarios colombianos en España.

El presidente de Venezuela, Hugo Chávez, reaccionó con molestia y dijo el miércoles al jefe del Gobierno español, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, que no tiene que dar explicaciones a España, ni a nadie, ante las acusaciones.

Fernández de la Vega dijo que por el pedido de España “no debe haber lugar ni espacio para la polémica porque todos estamos obligados a colaborar y siempre desde el respeto debido a las instituciones, a la justicia, a nuestro país”.

“De tibieza nada, actuación, clara, y sin lugar a dudas”, afirmó en conferencia de prensa posterior al Consejo de Ministros semanal respecto a críticas de que el Gobierno

español había suavizado su postura tras pedir explicaciones al Gobierno de Chávez.

Ante la reacción de Chávez, el ministro de Exteriores español, Miguel Angel Moratinos, intercedió para suavizar la situación y no perjudicar las relaciones comerciales entre ambos países.

El juez de la Audiencia Nacional Eloy Velasco dijo que el país latinoamericano había ayudado a ETA y a las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), considerados terroristas por Estados Unidos y la Unión Europea, a planear atentados contra autoridades colombianas de visita en territorio español.

El ministro del Interior español, Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba, ha pedido también al Gobierno de Chávez que ayude a los jueces a investigar la relación entre ETA y las FARC.

“Para esa investigación necesitamos la colaboración de Venezuela y eso sí se le puede pedir rotundamente al Gobierno venezolano”, dijo Rubalcaba en una entrevista en la televisora española TVE.

“Tienen que colaborar con la justicia española puesto que el asunto es de una gravedad importante”, agregó Rubalcaba, quien aconsejó al mismo tiempo evitar comentarios incriminatorios contra Venezuela.

Protestan en México por muerte de disidente cubano

MEXICO (AP) - Un grupo de mexicanos protestó el viernes frente a la sede de la embajada cuba en contra el gobierno cubano por la muerte del disidente Orlando Zapata y en demanda de la libertad de otros cubanos que consideran presos políticos.

Unas 100 miembros del llamado Frente Cívico “Orlando Zapata Tamayo” de apoyo a la Resistencia Cubana se manifestaron frente a la embajada cubana, de cuyo interior varias personas reaccionaron en su contra.

“Estamos hartos, no podemos permitir que en este siglo XXI se sigan llevando atropellos contra el pueblo cubano, queremos que se respeten los derechos humanos”, dijo Miguel Hernández, del Frente Cívico.

Los manifestantes gritaban consignas contra el régimen cubano y alzaban pancartas con una fotografía del disidente y la leyenda “Orlando Zapata Tamayo, asesinado por reclamar derechos humanos”.

Detrás de la reja que separa la representación diplomática de la calle, más de 30 personas, respondían a los manifestantes con gritos de apoyo a Cuba al tiempo de alzar banderas de la isla y una imagen del ex presidente Fidel Castro.

Policías formaron una valla para impedir que los manifestantes se acercaran a la reja de la embajada. Tampoco permitieron a la prensa acercarse, por lo que no fue posible averiguar si eran funcionarios de la representación diplomática quienes defendían a Cuba. “¡Cuánto les pagaron, váyanse a cobrar”, gritaban a los manifestantes.

Clinton: narcotráfico grave problema en Centroamérica

GUATEMALA (AP) - La secretaria de estado norteamericana Hillary Rodham Clinton dijo que el narcotráfico es uno de los principales problemas de la región centroamericana y se comprometió a aumentar la ayuda para combatir el flagelo.

“La seguridad es un reto principal, es por eso que a través de la Iniciativa de Seguridad Regional Centroamericana (CARSI, en inglés) vamos a combatir el crimen organizado, pandillas transnacionales y el tráfico de drogas”, dijo Clinton en una conferencia de prensa conjunta con el presidente guatemalteco Alvaro Colom. Guatemala, la última escala en una gira por América Latina, atraviesa un escándalo provocado por el arresto del jefe de la policía bajo acusaciones de robar cocaína a los cárteles de la droga y revenderla a otras organizaciones criminales.

Es el segundo jefe policial que cae en relación con delitos de narcotráfico en menos de un

año.

Clinton se reunirá también con los presidentes de El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, Belice, República Dominicana y el ministro de economía de Panamá.

“Uno de los motivos por los que aprecio la invitación del presidente Colom a los presidentes centroamericanos es que podremos tener una charla en profundidad de qué quieren en términos de ayuda y como podemos ayudar a sus esfuerzos”, dijo.

“Quiero estar segura que lo que Estados Unidos ha hecho es lo que los presidentes consideran el mejor acercamiento”, apuntó. Dijo que la necesidad de apoyar más a Centroamérica surge de que el combate al tráfico de drogas en Colombia y México ha provocado un aumento en el consumo y el tráfico de drogas así como la violencia asociada a estos en Centroamérica, una región ubicada entre esos dos países.



La secretaria de estado de Estados Unidos Hillary Rodham Clinton habló con estudiantes en Sao Paulo, Brasil, el miércoles 3 de marzo de 2010 (Foto AP/Andre Penner)

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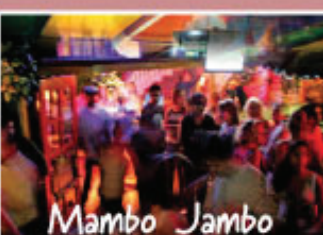
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